

Once Upon a Time

EVERY WEDNESDAY

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The Magic White Apron . . .
inside on page 18.



The Three Soldiers



1. Did you ever hear the story of the three poor soldiers who had fought hard in the wars and set off back on the road home, begging their way as they went? They had travelled a long way and were sick at heart at being unwanted in the world, where there was no work for them, no money and no food. "We can't roam around for ever," said one. "What will become of us?"



2. One evening they reached a deep gloomy wood and decided to have a sleep. And to make it all as safe as they could, it was agreed that two should lie down and sleep, while the third sat up and watched, in case wild animals attacked them. When he was tired he was to wake one of the others and sleep in his turn. Thus the task would be shared fairly among the three soldiers.



3. The one keeping watch made a good fire but he had not long sat beside it when, all of a sudden, up came a little dwarf in a red jacket. "We are but three old soldiers with nothing to live on," said the man on watch. "But come and warm yourself."



4. The dwarf thanked him and gave him an old cloak. "Put it on your shoulders and wish for anything you want," the dwarf said. Then the second soldier came on watch and the dwarf again appeared, giving him a purse which would always contain gold.



5. Then came the third soldier's turn to keep watch, and he also had the friendly dwarf for his guest. "Take this horn, my fine fellow," the dwarf told him. "Whenever you play a tune upon it, great crowds will gather around you and dance merrily to the music." "That's a happy idea," chuckled the soldier.



6. In the morning the three soldiers told each other about the dwarf and showed the gifts they had been given. "Now we can become wealthy men with all the gold we shall ever need," said the one who had been given the magic purse. The first soldier then slipped the dwarf's cloak around his shoulders.



7. "If we are to be wealthy men, then we must travel in fine style," he told his friends. So he made a wish and—poof! All in a flash a most elegant coach appeared, pulled by two strong and handsome horses. "Our carriage awaits us," said the third soldier. "Let us go out into the world and have adventure."



8. So the three soldiers climbed into the coach and sat down on padded velvet cushions. "Carry on, driver," said the first soldier, who had been given the magic cloak. "First we will stop at the best inn along the road and have a splendid meal, and then we will seek a castle to live in like millionaires."

See what happens to the three soldiers in next week's part of this delightful story.

The Common Cuckoo is a large bird with pointed wings and a long tail. It is only the male bird that says "cuckoo." Most cuckoos lay their eggs in the nests of other birds, such as Robins, Hedge Sparrows, and Meadow Pips.



This picture shows a baby cuckoo in the nest of a Meadow Pipit. There are no more eggs in the nest, because the young cuckoo has pushed them all out to make more room for itself.



Our All Sorts pages this week show you members of the Cuckoo family.

All Sorts

Seen only in India, Indochina, Java and Borneo, the Red-winged Cuckoo is a beautiful bird measuring 18 inches in length. It lives high in the trees, and lays its eggs mostly in the nests of birds called Babblers.



Fully grown, the Great Spotted Cuckoo is about 15½ inches long. It breeds in South Africa and South Europe, and its eggs are usually laid in a nest of one of the crow family.



Another beautifully coloured bird is the Emerald Cuckoo. It is quite small compared to most other cuckoos, being only 9 inches long. It is found in Tropical Africa, south of Sahara, and spends most of its time in the high branches of trees.



Yellow-billed Cuckoos breed in North America, and spend their winters in South America. Unlike most members of the cuckoo family, these cuckoos build their own nests and feed and look after their own young. The birds are about 11 inches long, and feed mainly on caterpillars.



of Cuckoos



The Channel-bill Cuckoo is a rather large bird, almost 25 inches in length. It has an unusual shaped beak, and like the Yellow-billed Cuckoo, builds its own nest and looks after its own young. Channel-bill Cuckoos come from the Lesser Sunda Islands, which lie off the coast of North-East Australia. They are fruit eating birds—one of their favourite fruits being figs.



Found in South Asia, the Greater Coucal Cuckoo has rather long legs, which enable it to run well but fly badly. It lives on flies and fruits and builds bulky domed nests, on or near the ground. Its size ranges from 12 to 30 inches in length.





BRER RABBIT

This week . . . Brer Rabbit gets the carrots.

B RER RABBIT was a sly, cunning sort of fellow, as you all know. He didn't much fancy doing any hard work, if he could get out of it.

"I'll just have a look around and see if I can come across anything good to eat," said Brer Rabbit to himself, so off he went lickety clippety across the grass, but although he looked high and low, he couldn't see anything that a rabbit could fancy to eat.

He had almost given up when he happened to pass a hedge and he heard digging sounds coming from the other side, and then grunting and panting sounds, as though there were some animals working very hard.

Now Brer Rabbit was the most inquisitive animal in the place, as well as being the most mischievous and he soon found himself a hole in the hedge and poked his nose into it, to find out what was going on

on the other side. The sight that he saw made his mouth water as though he hadn't eaten for days. There was Brer Fox and Brer Bear busy digging in a field—and what were they digging up but the biggest, juiciest carrots that hungry rabbit had ever seen. As they pulled out the carrots they threw them into a basket at the edge of the field and Brer Rabbit saw that the basket was nearly full with big, fat carrots.

Brer Bear stopped and leaned on his spade. "There's a fine crop of carrots there, Brer Fox," he said. "They'll fetch a good price when we take them to the market."

"Yes," said Brer Fox, pausing to wipe his face with his handkerchief. "I'm only glad that rascal Brer Rabbit didn't happen to come along and steal them before we managed to get them up."

"Oh, Brer Rabbit doesn't like hard work," growled Brer Bear. "He's a lazy fellow. Why I don't suppose he'd bother to

come this far, even."

"Just a few more to go, Brer Bear," said Brer Fox. "Then we've finished and we can take our basket back and put it in my shed until we're ready to take it to the market tomorrow."

Brer Rabbit's mouth was watering more and more and he tried hard to think how he could get those carrots for himself.

A few minutes later, Brer Fox stopped and threw down his spade. "That's the lot Brer Bear," he said.

Brer Bear threw down his spade, too. "I'm tired after all that day's digging, Brer Fox," said he. "Let's just have a little rest before we carry that basket home."

Brer Fox was only too pleased to rest, so the two animals stretched themselves out on the ground and in a few minutes they had fallen fast asleep. Now this was just what that rascal, Brer Rabbit, wanted. In a flash he was through the hole in the

fence and he had jumped right inside the basket of carrots and what a fine time he had then. Crunch—crunch—crunch! Brer Fox and Brer Bear would have heard if they had been awake, but they were fast asleep and they stayed asleep until it was quite dark.

Then Brer Fox woke up. "Wake up, wake up, Brer Bear," he called. "Why it's pitch dark. I can hardly see a thing. Let's get these carrots back right away."

Now although he didn't know it, Brer Rabbit was in that basket as well as carrots. That greedy rabbit was still eating carrots when the two animals woke up and now here he was, in the basket, and likely to be discovered when they got back to Brer Fox's house. Brer Rabbit didn't like that idea at all, for he was afraid the two animals might want rabbit stew as well as carrots if they found him there.

He thought and thought and then he had an idea. He put one paw cautiously out of the basket and tweaked Brer Fox's ear, hard.

"Why did you pull my ear, Brer Bear?" called Brer Fox.

"You must be imagining it, Brer Fox," said Brer Bear. "I didn't do anything."

A few minutes later, Brer Rabbit put up a paw and tugged Brer Bear's whiskers. Brer Bear let out a yell of pain. "There was no reason to do that, Brer Fox," he yelled.

"I did nothing," Brer Fox called back.

Then the naughty rabbit put out a paw and gave Brer Fox a good pinch.

"Stop that Brer Bear," called Brer Fox.

"I did nothing," said the puzzled Brer Bear.

Brer Rabbit gave Brer Bear another tweak and then punched Brer Fox again. Now neither of the animals could see him, because it was pitch dark.

"I know what you want," yelled Brer Fox "you want to frighten me away, so that you can take all the carrots for yourself, Brer Bear. I will show you." He dropped his end of the basket and hit out at Brer Bear. Brer Bear hit back and soon a fine fight was raging. Brer Rabbit was able to slip out of the basket and run away home. He called all his children and back they all went.

When they arrived, Brer Bear and Brer Fox were still fighting farther down the road, so Brer Rabbit and his children grabbed the basket and off they went home, dragging it along behind them.

As for Brer Bear and Brer Fox, when they were too sore and too tired to fight any more, they crawled home to bathe their cuts and bruises and when they returned next day there were no carrots to be seen.

**Clever Brer Rabbit gets up to more tricks
in "Once Upon a Time" next week.**



Where PEACHES come from

Fresh peaches are a most delicious fruit and many are grown under glass or on sunny walls in England. Alas, we do not have the most suitable climate for growing peaches because our frosts can easily harm the trees when they are in blossom. The ideal climate for peach growing is California, and it is there that most of the tinned peaches we enjoy today are grown. Once the fruit is ripe, it is only a matter of a few weeks at the most before it will turn bad, and so it is important that the fruit be picked when it is ripe but before it is soft.



The canning factories in California are close to the peach-growing areas. The peaches are taken to the factory and put into cans which are made from steel. Once the top has been placed on to a can, the fruit inside will remain fresh for ever, or until you open the can—then, of course, the fruit should be eaten within a couple of days. Before we started to can fruit, the Californian fruit grower could only sell to the people who lived nearby. Now, his peaches can be eaten and enjoyed by people who may live thousands of miles away.



Grace Darling

This is a Memory Test. When you have read this story, turn to page 16 and see if you can answer the questions about it.

ON September 7, 1838, a terrific gale was blowing in the North Sea, and a small passenger steamer was wrecked on the rocks off one of the Farne Islands. Nearby was Longstone Lighthouse, and in it lived Grace Horsely Darling, with her father and mother. Grace's father was the lighthouse keeper.

The storm raged all night and in the morning the wind was still howling and the sea was very rough. Then lighthouse keeper, William Darling, looked out of the window and saw that some passengers from the steamer had survived the storm and were clinging on to some rocks. As each wave broke, it covered them and they were in danger of being swept away.

Grace's father had a fishing boat called a coble, but an attempt at rescuing these people seemed madness. No boat could survive in that

wild sea. But Grace urged her father to try to reach the people and offered to help him by taking one of the oars herself.

The boat was launched, and after much tossing about in the rough waters, Grace and her father managed to reach the rock. Four men and one woman were rescued, and the party returned to the lighthouse where they were cared for by Grace and her mother. William Darling and two of the rescued men then rowed back to the rock and picked up the four remaining survivors.

When news of this heroic action was made known to the public, it created a great stir. 23-year-old Grace had shown great courage in the face of danger. William and Grace Darling were awarded Gold medals by the Humane Society, and about £1,000 was collected by the public and given as a gift to the brave couple.



The Star Maidens

FOR many years, Stella had lived by herself in a small house on a mountain. She became very lonely and often would sit on the mountain-side in the evenings and sing to the stars, who she felt were her friends. One day, the star-maidens, fairies whose job it was to light the stars, visited Stella and took her for a ride in a chariot pulled by two winged horses. The young girl helped them to light the stars and collect stardust for the Sandman who sprinkled it into the eyes of young children who couldn't sleep.

As the night wore on, Stella was dreading the moment when she would have to return to earth. She felt that nobody would miss her if she became a star-maiden, because nobody loved her.

But a handsome prince had been watching Stella through his telescope, and had fallen in love with her.

When dawn approached, the maidens took Stella back to earth and because there was no time to take her back to the mountain, they left the young girl on the first piece of earth they came to.

The Prince was heartbroken because he had been watching Stella all night and now she had disappeared. "How can I find her?" he thought sadly to himself.

Stella landed on a soft clump of grass, and when she looked up into the sky again, the shimmering chariot, the winged horses, and the star-maidens, had vanished. Sighing softly, she looked at her surroundings. The maidens had left her in a beautiful garden. There were flowering bushes, lush green trees and flower beds as far as the eye could see, and although Stella felt miserable at having been parted from her new-found friends, the splendour of the garden took her breath away.

"I wonder where I can be?" she said, sniffing a large white rose. "My home may be miles from here. How shall I find it again?"

Suddenly, the peace of the garden was shattered by an angry voice. "Trying to steal the Royal roses, eh?" The voice belonged to an angry little man, wearing a

large hat with a floppy brim. "You'll be arrested for this, you know!" he said.

Stella looked up in fright from the grassy bank where she was sitting. "Oh, I wasn't stealing the roses," she cried. "I would never do anything that was dishonest."

At this, the man lost some of his anger, and taking off his hat, scratched his bald head thoughtfully. "Well, what are you doing in the grounds of the Royal Palace?" he asked.

"But I didn't know I was in the grounds of a Palace. You see, the star-maidens didn't have time to take me back to my home," said Stella, in a rush.

"Look here, young miss," said the man, "I'm the night-watchman at the palace, and I don't know what you are talking about. What star-maidens? A lot of tales, if you ask me."

Stella realised that her story of the star-maidens would not be believed, and started to cry.

Nearby, in one of the palace towers, a young prince was looking searchingly at the countryside below. It was Prince David looking for Stella. Then the sound of a woman crying, came clearly through the window. The young prince thought that the sound was coming from the palace rose garden and went to find out.

Poor Stella was still sobbing when Prince David arrived on the scene. And when he saw that she was the same girl as the one he had watched through his telescope, he was overjoyed. He told the gardener to let Stella go and took her back to the palace.

There the prince told her that he had seen her in the sky and had fallen in love with her. He asked Stella to stay at the palace for a holiday, and during that time, Stella fell in love with the prince. They were married soon afterwards, and when night fell on their wedding day, they looked up at the sky and saw the star-maidens. "Be happy," they called, before disappearing. And neither Prince David or Stella ever saw the star-maidens again.



Elinor and her lazy Aunt



1. Once there lived a very unhappy farmer's daughter called Elinor. Her father was a kind man, but he had lost his wife and asked his sister to help him on the farm. But she was a lazy, selfish woman and she made poor Elinor work very hard on the farm and in the house and never gave her much to eat.



2. Elinor's aunt was very mean indeed. She grumbled to the farmer about the small eggs which his hens laid and the little milk which the cows gave. But what she did not tell him was that the hens and other farm animals were given little to eat by her, so that the eggs and milk were of very poor quality.



3. In fact, the aunt kept so much food back that when she went to market to sell the farmer's eggs, she could also sell the animals' food to buy herself new dresses and hats. When she returned home in all her finery, she strutted round the farm, but the animals laughed at her, for she looked quite ridiculous.



4. Elinor often put aside part of her own dinner and fed it to the animals, who were very grateful. But one day the farmer saw what Elinor was doing and he grew very angry. "Your poor aunt works hard to prepare the food," he told her. "You must eat it and not give it away, for it's much too good for animals."



5. One evening the animals gathered together in a large barn to think up a way of helping Elinor and themselves. "I have a plan," the pig grunted. "Next time the farmer's sister goes to market we must make sure that the farmer knows exactly what she is doing." "Yes, that's a good idea," hissed the goose.



6. Market day came and Elinor's aunt loaded up a cart with things she was going to sell. When the animals saw that she was ready, they started crowing and cackling and mooing and grunting, making such a terrible din that the farmer came rushing out of the house. "What is all the noise about?" he asked.



7. Then he noticed the bag with the animals' food in it. "Ah, and what's this?" he asked. His selfish sister began to cry. "I've been a very bad, selfish woman, brother," she wailed. The farmer told her that she would have to go back to her own home at once. "Elinor is old enough to take charge," he said.



8. And so little Elinor and her father worked happily together on the farm, and the animals became fat and merry because they were getting all the food they needed. Now that Elinor's lazy and selfish aunt had gone, the farmyard was a very happy place to visit, with little Elinor taking charge of things.



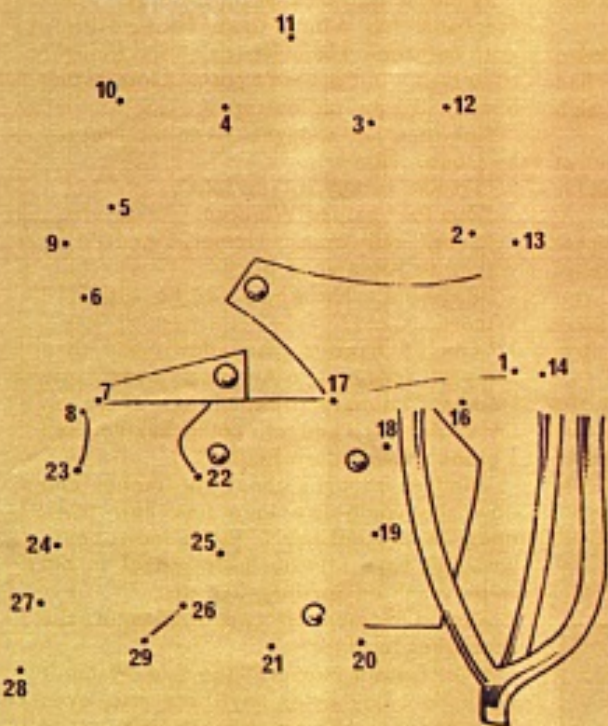
Beautiful Paintings

Our beautiful painting this week is called "Interior of a Dutch Courtyard," and it was painted by Pieter de Hooch, a Dutch painter who was born in Rotterdam, Holland, in 1629. It is said that the house was 45 years old when De Hooch painted it and in those days it was

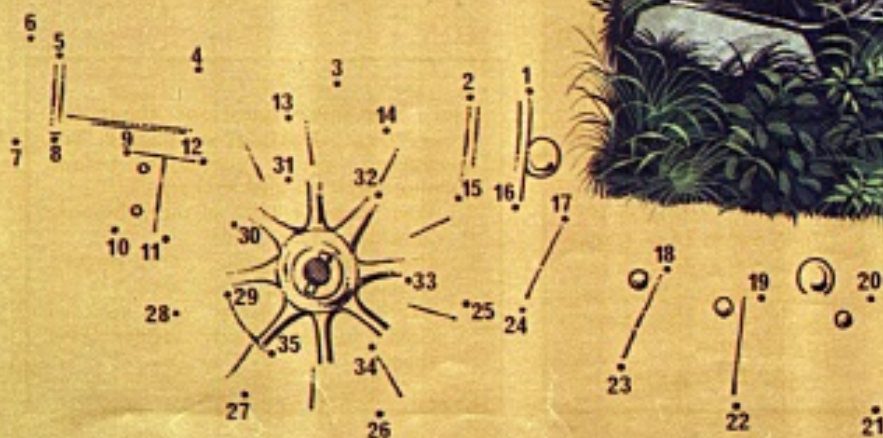
quite unusual for an artist to use such a modern building as a subject for a painting. De Hooch paid much attention to detail, and the picture is really interesting to look at. The mother and child in the picture are said to be De Hooch's wife and daughter.

A Cromwellian Soldier

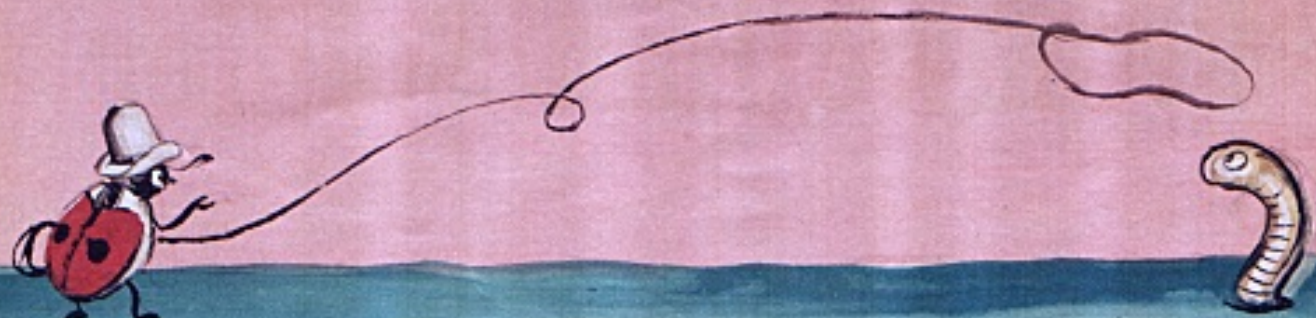
We have already talked, in past issues of "Once Upon A Time," of Charles I and Oliver Cromwell, who fought against each other in the Civil War. When Cromwell knew that he would have to fight the king, he began to get together an army, and he trained them himself. The men were taught to march, to fire muskets, and to fight. Discipline was very strict, and the soldiers all wore the same uniform. The man in the picture is wearing the uniform of a Cromwellian soldier. Because of their hair which was cut very short and made their heads look round in shape, soldiers of Cromwell's model army were nicknamed Roundheads.



The helmet above is of the type that would have been worn by a Roundhead. It served as a protection against sword blows from the enemy. To draw this helmet, join the dots from 1 to 29.



Cannons were important weapons in battles, and many were used during the Civil War at the Battle of Marston Moor, at the Battle of Dunbar, and at many others. Join the dots from 1 to 35 to draw a cannon.



The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse

Winifred and Cousin Homer . . . part 2.

WINIFRED, the shy little country mouse, was surprised when her big American cousin, Homer C. Mouse, arrived on the doorstep one day. Of course, being a polite little mouse, she invited Cousin Homer in for tea with her boy-friend Bertie.

Bertie and Cousin Homer got on very well. Homer had a big cattle ranch in America and he showed Bertie how to use a lasso just like a real cowboy.

The trouble was that Bertie got to like it and he lassoed all kinds of things. One day, Winifred suddenly felt her best hat fly off her head. She looked round in surprise, for there was no wind to blow it off and of course, there was Bertie with his lasso—and her hat.

"Sorry, Winifred," said Bertie. "I was just having a practice."

"Oh, were you indeed?" said Winifred. "I've a good mind not to tell you that I've just made a pot of tea and baked some cakes."

But she smiled as she said it, for she

could never be cross for long. Cousin Homer, who was very fond of Winifred's home-made cakes, said, "Gee, just lead me to them!"

In the pretty little cottage they sat down to tea and cakes and when he had had enough Homer looked around with a sigh of contentment.

"Tell me more about this cottage of yours, Winifred," he said. "I reckon it must be mighty old."

"Oh, indeed it is," squeaked Winifred. "My family has lived here for hundreds of years. It was built by Septimus Mouse, you know. His son, Columbus Mouse, ran away to sea and is said to be one of the first mice to reach America."

She pointed to a big old beam in the ceiling. "That is said to have come from the ship in which Columbus Mouse sailed to America," she went on. "Just when the ship was going to be broken up the beam needed replacing so a piece of timber from the ship was used."

"My, my! That's mighty interesting,"

declared Homer. "What a wonderful home this is."

Winifred quivered with pleasure. "Our Stephanie has a fine town house with a posh bathroom and electricity," she thought to herself, "but it hasn't got any interesting history like my old cottage."

Just then her thoughts were interrupted by Cousin Homer.

"I'd like to buy it," he said.

"Buy it?" gasped Winifred.

"Sure," said Cousin Homer. "And I'd be willing to pay a good price."

"But—but what would you do with it?" Winifred asked.

"Oh, I'd have it taken down and then shipped back home to America," said Cousin Homer. "I'd have it rebuilt out there on my cattle ranch and you could buy yourself a grand new modern house."

Winifred thought about the money and how she could live in a fine new town house like Stephanie's. But a new house wouldn't have a beam made out of an old ship's plank or anything like that.

After a moment or two of thought, she shook her head.

"No, Cousin Homer," she said. "I don't think I'd enjoy living anywhere else, even if it had a bathroom and electricity and ever so many other things. Best of all, I like living in my old-fashioned cottage, so let's have another cup of tea, Cousin Homer and talk of something else."

More about Winifred and Cousin Homer in "Once Upon A Time" next week.

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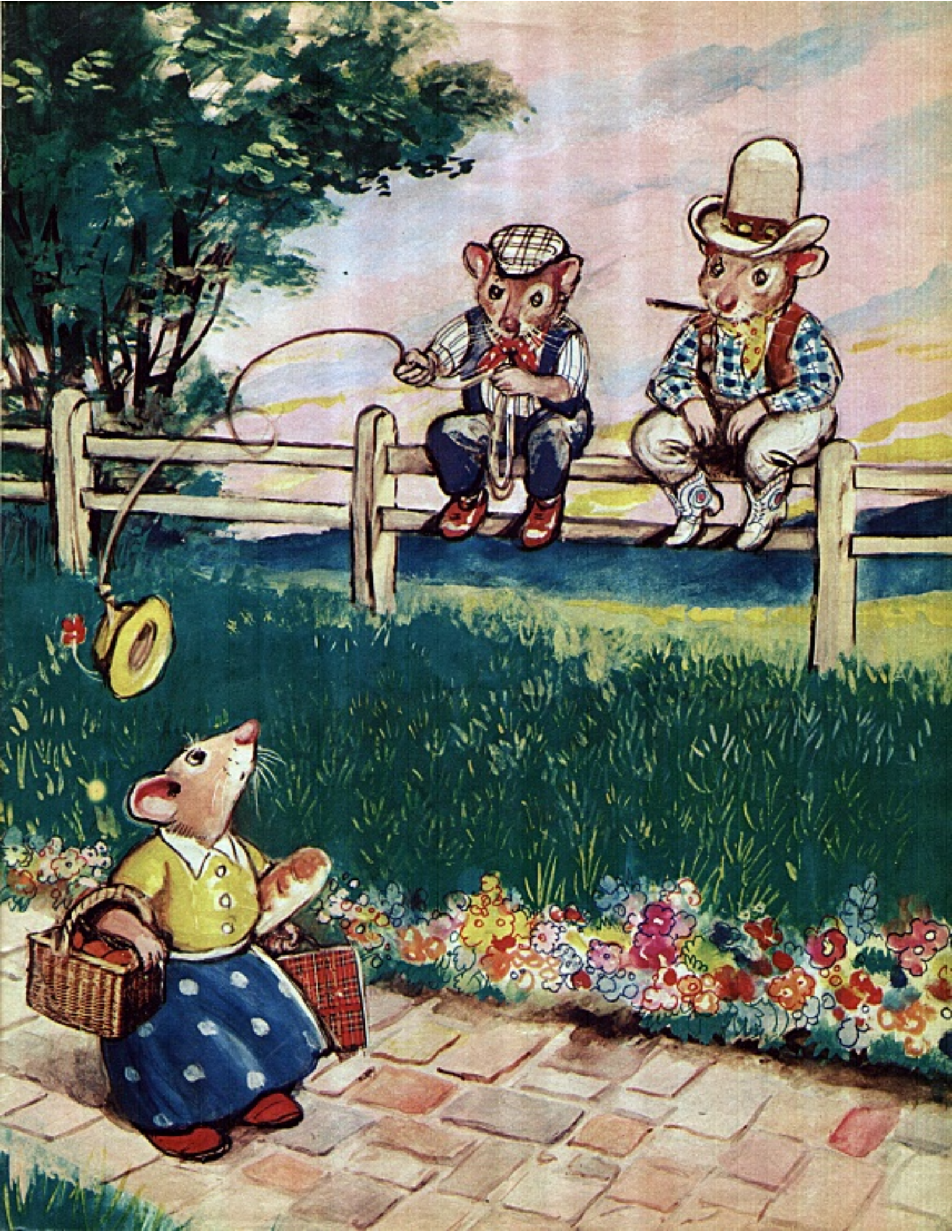
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Here are some questions about the story "Grace Darling" on page 9. Try answering these questions before turning back to check them.

1. What was the name of the lighthouse in which Grace lived?
2. How many people were rescued altogether?
3. Grace and her father were awarded Gold medals. Which society gave them?



The Magic White Apron



1. Many years ago in China there lived a young girl by the name of Ching Loo. She was very poor and lived with her grandmother. All day long they worked hard in the rice-fields, but at the end of the day they had only a small bowl of rice to eat for their supper. Ching Loo had never known anything different so she did not complain about the hard work and lack of food.



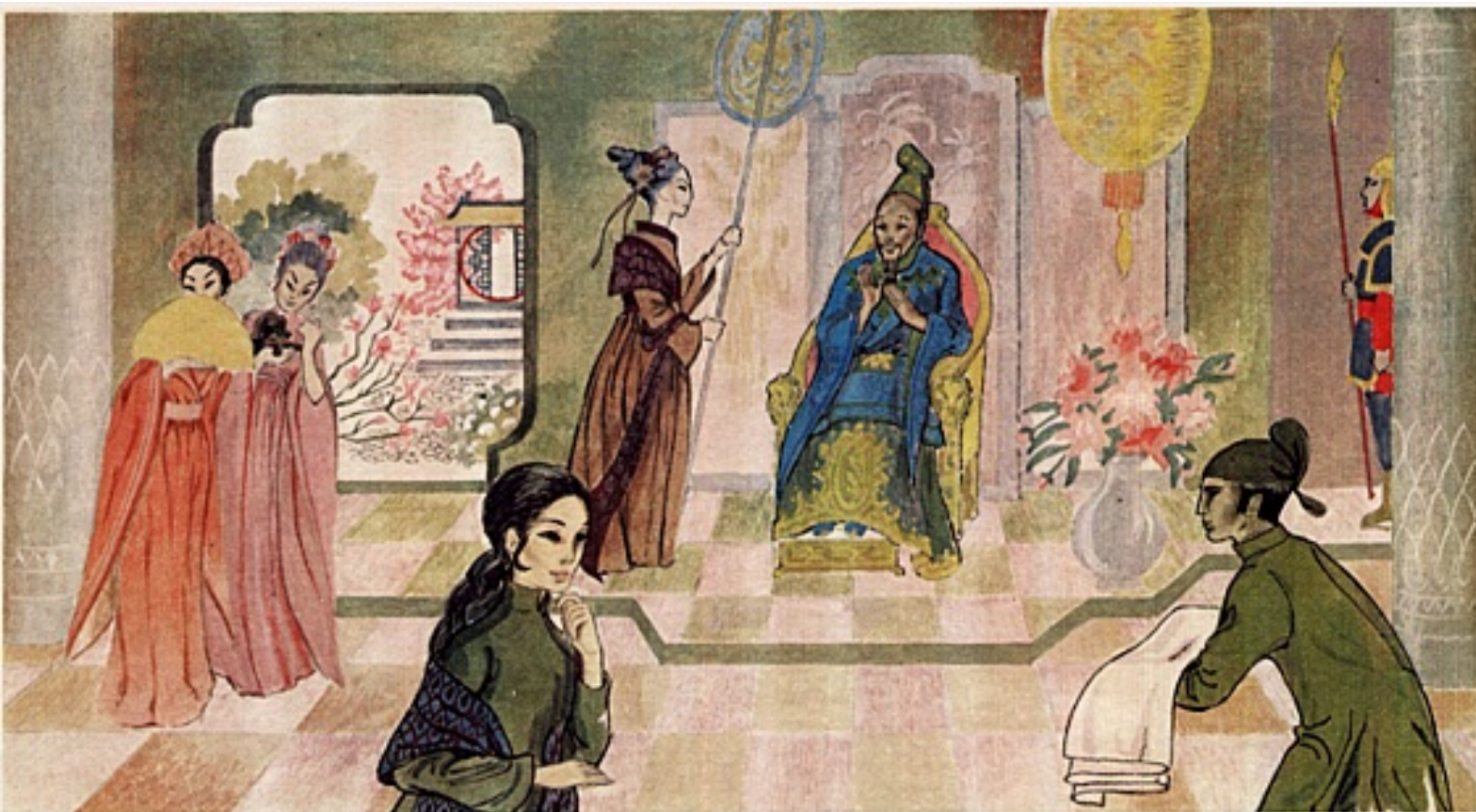
2. Now the grandmother was a very wise old lady and she could help and cure many people of their ills with her potions and ointments made from flowers and herbs. One day the servants of the high ruler came to the house. "Our master, the most noble mandarin, is sick with a strange fever which does not leave him," they said. "You are commanded to call upon him."



3. But the old lady said that she was too frail to travel such a distance, so giving her grand-daughter a small box with a very special healing ointment in it, she told her to set off for the mandarin's palace. "Goodbye, Ching Loo," she said.



4. The journey was long and difficult. Ching Loo travelled for several days and at last came to a palace where she found the mandarin lying ill on a couch. "Why did the wise old lady not come?" he asked. "She is too old, sire," she replied.



5. Remembering what she had been told to do by her old grandmother, Ching Loo stepped forward with the box of ointment. "She sent me with this special cure," she told the mandarin. "You must rub it on your forehead and wrists and sleep for two nights on a bed of rose petals." And after two days, when the mandarin had done this, he sat up completely cured.

6. "Such a marvellous thing as that deserves a special gift in return," he said, clapping his hands. At once a servant came in, carrying an apron of plain white cotton. Ching Loo felt a little disappointed at being handed such a simple gift, but she tried to appear pleased with it. "Now I must return to my grandmother to help her with the rice," she said.



7. The mandarin offered Ching Loo a horse to ride upon and a servant to escort her back to the tiny village. On the way, Ching Loo thought often about the white apron. "It is not of great use to poor people like us," she sighed to herself. "We could have done with money, but must be satisfied, I suppose."



8. But when Ching Loo showed her grandmother the white apron, the wise old woman smiled and put her hand into the pocket. She drew out a handful of gold coins—and whenever she and Ching Loo needed more they only had to put a hand into the pocket of the magic white apron and take out what they wanted.

FAMOUS NAMES

Interesting facts about people, places and things.



1. **Cleopatra's Needle.** This huge granite column, called a needle because of its pointed top, is 68½ feet high and now stands beside the River Thames in London. Set up in Egypt about 3,500 years ago as a monument to Thothmes, one of the kings, it was brought by sea to England in the year 1878.



2. **Zeus.** (Say it to rhyme with "goose.") This was the most powerful of all the ancient Greek gods. Later, in Roman times he was called Jupiter. He was the god of the sky who controlled the changes of the seasons of the year, guided the stars and, in particular, brought thunder and lightning.



3. **Chippendale.** Thomas Chippendale was the son of a clever wood-carver who lived in the English county of Worcestershire. Thomas went to London where he opened a furniture shop and his wonderful carving and design of chairs, dressing-tables and desks made him and his work famous all over the world.



4. **Charles Stewart Parnell.** Years ago, the whole of the country of Ireland was part of Great Britain and the people of Ireland wanted to rule themselves. The greatest leader of the struggle on the Irish side was Parnell—and today the southern part of Ireland is independent and called Eire.